



South Dakota Department of the Military South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs



VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL CEREMONY

The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), Aberdeen Area Chamber of Commerce Military/Veterans Committee, and the Vietnam Memorial Committee will be hosting a Vietnam Veterans Memorial Ceremony to commemorate the Vietnam Veterans.

The ceremony will be held on Saturday, April 27, 2013, at 11:00 am at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Anderson Park (1622 6th Avenue SE) in Aberdeen, SD.

Immediately following the program, a lunch will be served at the C.C. Croal VFW Post #17 (821 Circle Drive – located behind the Aberdeen Chrysler Center). Following lunch, the Vietnam Memorial Committee will be meeting to discuss additional events and projects to honor Vietnam Veterans in the Aberdeen area. Attendees are encouraged to stay for this meeting and share ideas/suggestions they might have to honor our Vietnam Veterans.

In case of inclement weather, the memorial service will be moved to the Senior Center building.

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ADVISING ANA GOES BEYOND COMBAT ROLES

While many of the stories that make headlines today concerning the conflict in Afghanistan focus on the Afghan National Security Forces taking the lead in the fight against insurgent forces for the future of the nation, a small group of Afghan National Army Soldiers are taking the lead on a different and equally important front: telling their own story to the Afghan people and the world.

The 203rd Corps public affairs NCOs are being advised by Soldiers from the South Dakota Army National Guard's 129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment to better understand the process of editing photos and video for release to local media outlets as a means of telling the ANAs story.

In addition to advising the ANA NCOs on how to better prepare their own products, the Guardsmen are also ensuring the ANA soldiers are able to pass along their knowledge to their counterparts across Afghanistan.



SIOUX FALLS GUARD UNIT RETURNS TO U.S. FROM MIDDLE EAST

Fourteen Soldiers from the 927th Engineer Detachment (Survey and Design Team), South Dakota Army National Guard, arrived to the United States Monday evening, April 15, after serving a nine-month deployment to Kuwait and Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Members of the Sioux Falls-based 927th arrived in Fort Bliss, Texas, and will spend about a week there completing de-mobilization requirements before returning to South Dakota.

The 927th's mission was to plan, conduct, prepare and provide planning studies and tests for identified engineer work projects for U.S. forces in the region. They also provided guidance, legal descriptions, certification and surveys for engineer projects.

Details of the unit's arrival home will be made available to the public as soon as they are confirmed.

SECRETARY ZIMMERMAN MEETS WITH VETERANS COUNCIL

This week Secretary Zimmerman met with leaders of the Veterans Council in Sioux Falls. Veterans Service Organizations at the meeting were the VFW, Vietnam Veterans of America, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Disabled American Veterans, American Legion and the Military Order of the Purple Heart. Also in attendance was Mike Holzhauser, chairman of the South Dakota Association of Veterans Service Officers Association.

Most of the meeting focused on past legislative sessions, the VSO salary supplement, and the task force being assembled to study delivery of services to South Dakota's veterans. South Dakota Veterans Council was very supportive of Secretary Zimmerman's concept to host an informational breakfast for legislators during the 2014 Legislative Session.

DEPARTMENT STAFF "PURPLED UP"



Thousands of men and women across South Dakota don the uniform and serve this great nation protecting our freedoms. While there is no doubt that our soldiers make great sacrifices, military families and children make sacrifices as well.

In honor of our military kids, South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs staff "purpled up" on April 12.

It's important that these children know just how much we value their mom or

dad's service to our country. South Dakota is home to approximately 7,400 military kids and many of these kids endure frequent moves and also face reintegration issues as they start life in a new school.



TURNER COUNTY SELECTS NEW VSO

Turner County has hired Thomas Sparrow as their new County Veterans Service Officer. Tom's hours are 9:00 am—12:00 noon and 1:00 pm —4:00 pm on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. The office phone number for the Turner County Veterans Service Officer is 605-297-3431. Tom's email address is tsparrow@iwv.net.

Tom replaces James Neal.

The Department welcomes "Tom" to the veteran network and looks forward to assisting him and his veterans.



VA TO CONDUCT SURVEY RE VETERAN UTILIZATION OF HEALTH BENEFITS

The VHA's Office of the Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Health (ADUSH) for Policy and Planning is conducting the 2013 edition of the national VHA Survey of Enrollees. The purpose of the survey is to provide critical and essential information on veteran utilization of health services. This information supports annual VHA projections of enrollment, utilization, and expenditures, as well as into a variety of high level VHA budget and policy related analyses.

Approximately 2,000 enrolled veterans in each Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) will be surveyed. In total, the survey will collect information on a random sample of 42,000 veterans enrolled in the VA system, who choose to participate in an approximately 15-30 minute telephone call. Veterans in the sample may also complete the survey by mail or web.

Full initiation of the survey will begin the week of April 14th and will continue for 16 weeks.

Enrolled veterans selected for the survey will receive a letter that provides information about the survey and the contractor conducting the survey on behalf of VA.



Previous survey reports are available on the VHA's Office of the ADUSH for Policy and Planning internet Web site at: <http://www.va.gov/healthpolicyplanning/reports1.asp>

TSA EXPANDS WOUNDED WARRIOR SECURITY PROGRAM TO ALL VETERANS

Over the years, members of the Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) have made known their concerns regarding airport security, such as being requested to get out of their wheelchairs, remove their shoes, or display personal medical devices. Now an existing Transportation Security Administration (TSA) program for injured service members has recently been expanded to permit all veterans to proceed through security safely and with dignity.

Initially, the TSA worked with the Department of Defense (DOD) to create a program to ease the airport screening process for injured service members. Since 2005, DOD's Military Severely Injured Joint Services Operations Center Program has included TSA staff on a 24-hour, 7-day a week basis. When an injured service member provided flight information to the center, TSA staff would guide the passenger through the security process. The TSA liaison officer notified the appropriate federal security director at relevant airports to ensure that any security screening required at those airports would be conducted by TSA screening experts with empathy and respect.

Recently, this program became available to all veterans, so anyone who has served in the military can take advantage.

The veteran or service member should contact the Operations Center's 24–72 hours before a confirmed flight at the toll-free number (888) 262-2396 with flight information. The passenger may also email the call center at MSIJSOC@DHS.GOV with the itinerary. Callers will be connected to a TSA liaison officer who will notify security officials as described above. The hotline will not be able to assist if the call is more than 72 hours or less than 24 hours before the flight is scheduled to leave.

Those traveling with injured troops or veterans must receive standard screening.

According to TSA, the number of wounded service members using the Wounded Warrior Screening Program is steadily increasing, with approximately 4,252 in 2011, 5,914 in 2012, and 3,315 since the start of 2013.



WOUNDED WARRIOR

Airport Security Assistance for veterans and wounded warriors —

Contact TSA 24-72 Hours Prior to a Confirmed Flight and Provide Flight Information

Call 888-262-2396 or

Email: msijsoc@dhs.gov

Upcoming Events

Apr. 19-21—VABHHCS Women Veterans Retreat—Ft. Meade VA Medical Center
 Apr. 25—Open House—Aberdeen CBOC—4:00-7:00 pm
 Apr. 27—Vietnam Veterans Memorial Ceremony—Anderson Park—Aberdeen—11:00 am
 May 2—Open House—Watertown CBOC—4:00—7:00 pm
 May 3-5—DAV State Convention—The Lodge—Deadwood
 May 11—Yellow Ribbon for the 935th—Rapid City
 May 15—Sioux Falls Vets Center Open House—3200 W. 49th Street—11:00 am—2:00 pm.
 May 19—Yellow Ribbon for the 927th—Sioux Falls
 May 21—SDDVA Spring Mini Conference—Sturgis Veterans Club (868 Main Street) - 10:00 am
 May 22—SDDVA Spring Mini Conference—Pierre American Legion (520 S. Pierre Street) - 10:00 am
 May 23—SDDVA Spring Mini Conference—Brookings City/County Bldg (520 3rd Street) - 10:00 am
 May 27—MJFSVH Groundbreaking Ceremony—1:00 pm
 Jun. 6-9—American Legion State Convention—Ramkota Hotel/Conference Center—Rapid City
 Jun. 13-16—VFW State Convention—Watertown Convention Center
 Jul. 1—Black Hills National Cemetery Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am
 Jul. 26—Korean War Commemoration Display—SDNG Museum—Pierre
 Jul. 27—Korean War Wreath Laying Ceremony at the SD State Capitol—Pierre
 Jul. 31– Aug. 4—American Veterans Traveling Tribute—Hot Springs
 Aug. 4—Freedom Poker Ride—Hot Springs
 Aug. 24-25—Freedom Bird 2013—W. H. Lyon Fairgrounds—Sioux Falls 10:00 am—5:00 pm
 Oct. 1—Black Hills National Cemetery Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am
 Dec. 15—Wreaths Across America Ceremony—Black Hills National Cemetery—10:00 am

**Veterans
Crisis Line**



1-800-273-8255
PRESS 1

IT'S YOUR CALL

Confidential help for
Veterans and their families

To talk to the VA BHHCS
Suicide Prevention Coordinator
call 605-347-2511 x 7087



Confidential chat at VeteransCrisisLine.net or text to 838255

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